

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 DAKAR 6224

UNA FOR TEFFT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECON

SUBJECT: U.S. FOREIGN ECONOMIC POLICY TOWARD AFRICA

1. ACCOMPANIED BY MR. BOEHME, REDSO/WA AND MR. CHARLES MANN, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY OF THE ENTENTE COUNCIL, DR. ANNE HOLLOWAY MET WITH MR. PAUL KAYA, ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY AND OTHER ENTENTE COUNCIL SECRETARIAT MEMBERS THE AFTERNOON OF AUGUST 14 IN ABIDJAN. IN A LENGTHY INTERVIEW, MR. KAYA REVIEWED THE PURPOSE AND INSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURES OF THE ENTENTE AND DISTINGUISHED ITS ROLE FROM THAT OF OTHER SUB-REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS.

2. WHILE THE HISTORY OF THE ENTENTE IS PERHAPS BETTER KNOWN TO THE DEPARTMENT BECAUSE OF ITS LONG ASSOCIATION WITH AID/REDSO/WA, KAYA MADE SEVERAL PERTINENT COMMENTS REGARDING ITS STYLE AND PRACTICE OF OPERATION THAT PROMPT REVIEW. AS A COORDINATING BODY TO SUPPORT NATIONAL PROJECTS OF THE FIVE MEMBER STATES, A FULL 75 PERCENT OF ITS BUDGET REMAINS CONTRIBUTED BY THE IVORY COAST. ALTHOUGH INITIALLY A COUNCIL OF POLITICAL
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SOLIDARITY AS WELL, THE FOCUS AND ACTIVITIES APPEAR STRICTLY ECONOMIC. KAYA HIMSELF HAS EXTRAORDINARY AUTHORITY (ON BEHALF OF THE FIVE CHIEFS OF STATE) TO ENTER INTO A WIDE AND VARIED RANGE OF NEGOTIATIONS, INCLUDING EXTERNAL FINANCIAL OVERTURES, PRIOR TO FINAL PROJECT DECISIONS ARE TAKEN. AFTER MORE THAN A DECADE, THE SECRETARIAT REMAINS MINISCULE AND UN-AFRICANIZED IN MANPOWER TERMS.

3. ACCORDING TO KAYA, THE ENTENTE IS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY AN EXECUTOR AGENCY FACILITATING THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF ITS MEMBERS AND ASSISTING THE NATIONAL STATE MINISTRIES IN IMPLEMENTING AUTHORIZED PROJECTS. WITH SOME AMBIGUITY, HE INSISTED THAT HIS OWN ROLE WAS NOT ON A POLICY-MAKING LEVEL AND CHIEFLY DEPENDENT UPON THE WILL OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND CHIEFS OF STATE WHILE IN PRACTICE ADMITTING TO HIS PREPARATION OF PROJECT DESIGN AND DOCUMENTATION AS WELL AS TO HIS UNPARALLELED ACCESS TO THE CHIEFS OF STATE REGARDING ANY ASPECT OF THE ENTENTE'S DIRECTION AND ACTIVITIES.

4. IN FURTHER SUPPORT OF ACTUAL PRACTICAL ENTENTE OPERATIONS, KAYA RECORDED THE SECRETARIAT'S PROPOSAL SUBMISSION TO THE ANNUAL MEETINGS THOUGH EMPHASIZING THAT THE CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENT OFTEN PROPOSE PROJECTS TOO, PROJECTS THAT CAN BE EXECUTED SOLELY IN ONE MEMBER OF STATE. STRESSING THE ENTENTE'S CHARTER OF SOLIDARITY, KAYA SAID THAT NO QUOTA SYSTEM IS USED BUT AUTHORITY FOR PROJECT EXECUTION RESTS WHERE GREATEST NEEDS HAVE BEEN DETERMINED. THE ENTENTE COUNCIL SHOULD BE VIEWED AS A FLEXIBLE ORGANIZATION BASED ON PRAGMATIC BIAS OF FIVE CHIEFS OF STATE WHICH STRESSES "REAL" SITUATIONS.

5. OVER NEXT FIVE YEARS, THE FIVE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT HAVE DECIDED THAT ENTENTE ACTIVITIES FIRST SHOULD BE DIRECTED TOWARD RURAL
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DEVELOPMENT AND SECONDLY, TOWARD PROJECTS WHICH WILL AID THE LARGEST NUMBER OF POOR PEOPLE. CURRENTLY, ENTENTE ACTIVITIES STRESS AFRICANIZATION OF THE INDIGENOUS PRIVATE SECTOR, PARTICULARLY THROUGH THE AFRICAN ENTERPRISES DIVISION, AN AID FUNDED PROGRAM.

6. KAYA STATED THAT SINCE THE ENTENTE DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY ROLE IN SETTING COUNTRY TARGETS BUT MERELY EXECUTES PROJECT DECISIONS, THE COUNCIL'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE SIMPLE AND CLEAR. FOR EXAMPLE, IF ECOWAS SETS UP A REGIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROJECT (AS IT HAS JUST DONE), THE ENTENTE CAN FURNISH TECHNICAL INFORMATION ON ITS MEMBER STATES AND/OR EXECUTE THE PROJECT IN THE MEMBER STATES. COUNCIL CAN GO FURTHER AND UNDERTAKE DISCRETIONARY CONTACTS WITH FOREIGN INSTITUTIONS CONCERNING FUNDING OF INTER-REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. KAYA DISMISSED ANY NOTION OF COMPETITION AMONG SIMILAR BODIES BY EMPHASIZING COUNCIL'S WILLINGNESS TO EXECUTE AND COORDINATE ON PROJECTS ON BEHALF OF OTHER REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS. LATER HE ALSO REFERRED TO HIS IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO THE ENTENTE CHIEFS OF STATE AS AN ADDED ADVANTAGE OVER OTHER REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

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7. IN REVIEWING POLITICAL BENEFITS OR SPIN-OFFS RESULTING FROM ECONOMIC SOLIDARITY OF THE ENTENTE, KAYA STRESSED THE CHANGED INTERNAL PERCEPTION OF THE COUNCIL ITSELF. WHEN IT WAS ESTABLISHED, THE FAMILIARITY AMONG THE FIVE CHIEFS OF STATE PROMPTED A FREQUENCY OF CONSULTATION ON MANY MATTERS. AS POLITICAL CONDITIONS AS RESULT OF COUP DETATS SHIFTED LEADERSHIP, DANGER AROSE THAT COUNCIL MIGHT BECOME TOO IDEOLOGICALLY CLOUDED UNTIL HOUPHET-BOIGNY ASSERTED IVORY COAST'S ECONOMIC ROLE IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE "ENTENTE" PROCESS. THE GROWTH OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION OVER THE YEARS AND THE MAINTENANCE OF COMMON CURRENCY AND CUSTOMS STANDARDS ARE VIEWED AS POSITIVE ACHIEVEMENTS. ANOTHER SPIN-OFF IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EFFECTIVE SYNTHESIS OF AFRICAN AND DONOR IDEAS REGARDING PROJECT EXECUTION. KAYA EMPHASIZED THE COUNCIL'S CONTINUED DESIRE FOR PARTICIPATION OF FOREIGN ADVISORS AND ITS WILLING ADAPTATION TO DONORS' RULES AND PROCEDURES. HE GAVE AS AN EXAMPLE THE ENTENTE'S CONTINUING COOPERATION WITH US/AID DESPITE THE SHIFTING CONGRESSIONAL POSTURES GOVERNING AND FUNDING PRINCIPLES. THE MOST FAR-REACHING POLITICAL BENEFIT IS THE UNANIMITY OF DECISION-
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MAKING BY THE ENTENTE'S SUPREME AUTHORIZING INSTRUMENTS, THE
CHIEFS OF GOVERNMENTS. IT IS THIS REQUIREMENT OF UNANIMITY
OF ALL FIVE AGREEING TO AND
SIGNING OFF ON ANY GIVEN PROJECT, THAT DEMONSTRATES THE
PRAGMATIC POLITICAL GOAL OF SOLIDARITY. BUT IT ALSO MEANS
THAT CERTAIN COUNTRIES (ISRAEL, USSR) CANNOT BE APPROACHED
COLLECTIVELY FOR PROJECT DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE BECAUSE OF
MEMBER POLITICAL DIFFERENCES. IN SUMMARY, KAYA
EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN THE CAPACITY OF THE ENTENTE TO
CONTINUE ITS CURRENT LEVEL OF ACTIVITIES; TO CONTAIN
BUREAUCRATIC EXPANSION AND UNDERUTILIZATION OF PROFESSIONAL
STAFF; TO EXPAND DONOR PARTICIPATION; AND TO MAINTAIN
ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE OF POSSESSING "OPEN DOORS AND OPEN
WINDOWS" TOWARD FOREIGN INVOLVEMENTS.
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